

REMARKS

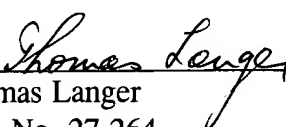
This Amendment is submitted in response to the September 2, 2004 Office Action issued in connection with the above-identified patent application. With this Amendment, claims 5, 7, 17-27 and 31 stand as canceled, and independent claims 1 and 28 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Upon entry of this Amendment, the pending claims will be independent claim 1 with claims 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8-16 depending therefrom, and independent claim 28, with claims 29, 30 and 32-38 depending therefrom.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 7-9 and 31-33 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended herein to include the features of claim 7, and claim 7 has been canceled. Thus, amended claim 1 is in condition for immediate allowance. Also, claim 28 has been amended to include the features of claim 31, and claim 31 has been canceled. Thus, independent claim 28 is also in condition for immediate allowance. The claims dependent on each of claims 1 and 28 are allowable therewith.

In view of the foregoing amendments, it is believed that all of the pending claims are now in condition for immediate allowance, and favorable action to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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